

**Lake Michigan Fisheries Team**  
**March 7, 2001 – Sheboygan**

**Notes**

(prepared by Bill Horns, March 13, 2001)

**Present:** Bill Horns, George Boronow, Mike Toney, Brad Eggold, John Kubisiak, Steve Hogler, Pradeep Hirethota, Matt Coffaro, Lee Meyers, Paul Peeters, Gus Ernst, Tom Hansen, Andy Fayram, Justine Hasz.

**Proposed next meeting:** 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tuesday, April 17, Deland Center, Sheboygan

- 1) **Yellow perch in Green Bay.** The LMFT had been asked to review its initial recommendation regarding yellow perch in Green Bay. In January, the LMFT recommended a) initiating the process with a rule that would close both sport and commercial fishing and b) taking that rule to the NRB in February for approval of hearings. A green sheet was prepared accordingly, but consideration of this by the NRB has been postponed from February to March. On February 19 the Lake Michigan Fisheries Forum declined to support the total closure of yellow perch fishing, and instead recommended reducing the commercial harvest limit from 200,000 pounds to 100,000 pounds and reducing the sport daily bag limit from 25 to 5 fish. On March 6, the Lake Michigan Commercial Fishing Board recommended a 100,000 pound commercial harvest limit.

Action: The LMFT reviewed all available data, including an up to date run of the Walters population model, and discussed the recommendations of the LMFF and the LMCFB. After a lengthy discussion, the LMFT recommended asking the NRB to approve hearings on a rule that would establish a 10-fish daily sport bag limit and a 20,000 annual commercial harvest limit.

- 2) **Work planning for 2001-2003.** For the first time in my memory, the Lake Michigan program is facing serious cuts in funding for projects. Most, if not all, project proposals have been submitted through the electronic system, but it remains for us to collectively review and prioritize them.

Action: No action was taken, other than to update the preliminary budget projections (see attachment). Further discussion was deferred to the April meeting.

- 3) **Whitefish quotas.** Paul Peeters discussed his biennial review of whitefish data and quotas. Even allowing for a declining harvest of whitefish in the Michigan portion of northern Green Bay, the SAP model indicated that little if any change in the total annual commercial harvest limit was appropriate.

Action: The LMFT did not recommend changing the whitefish quotas at this time. Paul will obtain and implement a different model using AD Model Builder, and report the results to the team.

- 4) **Team Nearshore.** We touched briefly on issues related to managing feral steelhead brood stocks, and discussed the possibility of swapping yearling brown trout with Indiana next spring (2002) for yearling Skamania.

Action: Steve Hogler will work with Team Nearshore to develop a recommendation.

- 5) **Whitefish quota transfers.** In addition to other actions, the LMCFB had asked us to discuss ways to allow transfers of whitefish quotas between zones. This was discussed, without clear resolution. No biological concerns were raised.
- 6) **Other subjects.** Other subjects discussed included a) FH-48-00, the rule changing the minimum catch requirement for relicensing of commercial fishers, b) the Lake Michigan Integrated Fisheries Management Plan planning process, c) annual management reports for the Lake Michigan Committee, and d) sea lamprey marking trends.

**Attachment to Lake Michigan Fisheries Team notes – March 7, 2001**  
**Preliminary Funding Needs Analysis – 2001-2003**

**Category 0: Special Projects – Great Lakes Fisheries** (\$353,508 from Salmon Stamp revenues and \$67,735 from SEG-License Fees have budgeted for this category.)

| Salmon Stamp                                  |      |          |   |                         |                       |
|---|------|----------|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Region  | Org  | Activity | Project   | new or ongoing          | needed annual funding |
| NE  | FHLK | FHCA     | Lake trout restoration assessment/monitoring  | ongoing                 | \$19,624              |
| NE  | FHLK | FHCC     | Steelhead broodstock management; inc. weir data collection  | ongoing                 | \$10,250              |
| NE  | FHLK | FHHZ     | Coho/chinook broodstock management; inc. weir data collection. This total includes \$16,400 for continuation of past work and \$3,025 to allow participation in a lakewide forage assessment program using modern acoustic methods. | ongoing, with additions | \$19,425              |
| NE  | FHUG | FHCB     | Assess brown trout strains  | ongoing                 | \$3,400               |
| NE  | FHUG | FHCD     | Oconto River habitat work   | ongoing                 | \$7,700               |
| NE  | FHLK | FHNL     | Nearshore rainbow project, tagging study  | ongoing                 | \$5,000               |
| NE  | FHLK |          | Naturalist for Kewaunee facility  | new                     | \$15,000              |
| SE  | FHSL | FHCR     | Lake Michigan sport fishing creel survey  | ongoing                 | \$106,000             |
| SE  | FHSL | FHIC     | Analysis of Lake Michigan creel survey data   | ongoing                 | \$16,150              |
| SE  | FHSL | FHSE     | Salmon and trout stocking evaluation; inc. weir data collection   | ongoing                 | \$24,500              |
| NOR projects – estimate based on FY00 funding |      |          |   |                         | \$127,412             |
| Total   |      |          |   |                         | \$354,461             |

| SEG-License Fees                                      |      |      |  |                |                       |
|---|------|------|--|----------------|-----------------------|
| Region  | Org  | Act  | Project  | new or ongoing | needed annual funding |
| NE  | FHLF | FHCH | Assess walleye fishery on lower Fox River              | ongoing        | \$4,600               |
| NE  | FHLF | FHDO | Southern Green Bay sport fishing creel survey          | ongoing        | \$31,750              |
| NE  | FHUG | FHCG | Assess yellow perch population in Green Bay            | ongoing        | \$35,000              |
| NE  | FHUG | FHDN | N. pike habitat improvements- follow-up past work      | ongoing        | \$9,000               |
| NE  | FHUG | FHJZ | Assess sturgeon populations in Green Bay tributaries   | ongoing        | \$2,000               |
| SE  | FHSL | FHCG | Assess and monitor yellow perch population in L. Mich. | ongoing        | \$18,350              |
| SE  | FHSL | FHJX | Predation on young salmon by stocked walleye           | ongoing        | \$13,600              |
| SE  | FHSL |      | Smallmouth bass survey in L. Mich. harbors             | new            | \$4,350               |
| CO  | FHFA |      | Travel and meals for Lake Michigan Fisheries Forum     | new            | \$3,000               |
| WCR and NOR projects - estimate based on FY00 funding |      |      |  |                | \$18,680              |
| Total   |      |      |  |                | \$140,330             |

**Category P: Special Projects – Commercial Fisheries** (\$39,463 from SEG-License Fees has been budgeted for this category.)

| Region  | Org  | Act  | Project   | new or ongoing          | needed annual funding |
|---|------|------|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| NE  | FHLK | FHBJ | Commercial catch data management. This total is the sum of \$9,494 to continue past data management, \$1,500 to reimburse Commercial Fishing Board members for travel expenses, and \$2,075 to cover Al Blizel's expenses for implementing the pilot electronic reporting system. | ongoing, with additions | \$13,069              |
| NE  | FHLK | FHCV | Determine commercial harvest quotas; inc. coop acoustic work  | ongoing                 | \$5,460               |
| NE  | FHUG | FHBK | Yellow perch commercial catch monitoring on Green Bay   | ongoing                 | \$10,000              |
| SE  | FHSL | FHHL | Assess y. perch recruitment in LM; support research and YPTG  | ongoing                 | \$9,000               |
| NOR projects - estimate based on FY00 funding |      |      |   |                         | \$21,200              |
| Total   |      |      |   |                         | \$58,729              |

**Other:** Equipment and maintenance (but not fuel) costs for the Perca and the Barney should be covered by regional equipment and maintenance budgets under activity code FHAD. It is estimated that equipment and maintenance costs for the Barney will be \$14,500 in the first year and \$13,900 in the second year, and that costs for the Perca will be \$17,600 for the first year and \$4,700 for the second year.